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AN OPEN LETTER TO FRIENDS  
OF THE MUSEUM—AND OF  
THE PEOPLE

I HAVE been asked more than once, "What can I do for the Museum?" I have answered, "Add to our endowment fund." "I don't want to add to your endowment fund," has been the reply. "To add to your endowment fund does not attract me; it is too general a suggestion. But I should like to give one or two thousand dollars for some single, definite thing."

Here is the opportunity to give the single, definite thing. About a year ago some of our more progressive Trustees determined to test experimentally the desire of the public for the addition of good music to the other attractions of art in the Museum. Four Trustees contributed the necessary cost. Six promenade concerts have been given on Saturday evenings by David Mannes and a symphony orchestra. The response of the public and the degree of pleasure manifested by the people attending these concerts are described in the following article written by the Director, Edward Robinson, and in the letter on page 23. The constant increase in attendance is illustrated by the following figures:

DATE	ATTENDANCE
February 9, 1918	781
" 16, "	1,926
January 4, 1919	2,419
" 11, "	3,726
" 18, "	5,617
" 25, "	7,066

Plainly these concerts should be continued if their cost can be provided. There should certainly be three series of four concerts each every year, instead of one. Each concert costs, in round figures, \$1,000, including the expense of lighting and extra attendance. A friend of the Museum who "saw" one of the recent concerts, has offered to pay for two, and the Trustees have guaranteed to find friends who will supply two more, so that a second series is assured. I say "saw" the concert advisedly; for, impressive as was the music to the ear, the sight of the multitude was far more impressive.

Here, then, is an opportunity for those who wish to give some definite thing to the Museum, or, rather, to the people. One thousand dollars gives one concert, \$4,000 gives a series, and, as one who "saw" the last concert remarked, the income of \$100,000 would endow a series in perpetuity.

A recent appeal of the New York Times for the "one hundred neediest cases" met an immediate response. Several of these cases called for as much as \$500, or, to supply the needs of a single family of five persons, say \$100 apiece. Twice that sum, \$1,000, will supply the needs—needs, to be sure, of a different kind, but nevertheless needs—of seven thousand persons. That is less than fifteen cents apiece.

The Museum is no beggar, but it owes to its friends the knowledge of such an opportunity. It should not be a perquisite of the Trustees. Who responds? Reply to the Secretary.

R. W. DE F.

## MUSIC IN THE MUSEUM

THE four orchestral concerts which the generosity of four friends of the Museum enabled it to offer to the people of New York on Saturday evenings in January, proved in every respect a most gratifying success. The programs were arranged and conducted with the skill and taste to which we have grown accustomed at the hands of David Mannes and the music was beautifully performed by fifty-two musicians taken from leading symphony orchestras in the city; but to those of us who watched the results of the experiment from the inside the most satisfactory feature of it all was the response of the public, to which the concerts were literally a free gift. No tickets were required, the doors were open without restrictions of any kind to all who chose to come; and as the Museum was opened on these evenings solely because of the concerts, being closed on Saturday evenings this season as a necessary measure of economy, it is evident that those who came were attracted by the opportunity to hear good music well played. At the first concert the attendance

was 2,419; at the second 3,726; at the third 5,617, and at the fourth 7,066.

Gratifying as were these numbers, and their steady increase through the series, the character and interest of each audience was still more impressive. The concerts commenced at eight o'clock. Two hours before that people began to assemble, by half-past seven the limited seating capacity which we were able to provide was entirely taken up, and from that time every nook and cranny from which there was the slightest possibility of hearing was occupied, not only on the two floors of the hall itself, but in all the neighboring galleries. Even the main staircase was so crowded that a passage over it was maintained with difficulty. People were sitting on the floors—where we tried to add a little to their comfort by distributing among them the straw cushions familiar at baseball games—on pedestals, on railings, everywhere that a squatting-place offered itself, and with all this, hundreds stood patiently through the two hours that the music lasted, applauding no less enthusiastically than their more fortunate neighbors.

Yet in spite of the crowding there was not the slightest symptom of disorder. At no time were any of the show-cases or objects on exhibition threatened with injury, and no damage of any kind occurred. While the music was being performed, practically absolute silence prevailed, even in the remoter parts of the audience, and if perchance anyone started to talk those about him were quick to remind him what they were there for. In other words, the audience took care of itself most admirably, and left our attendants little to do beyond keeping a clear passageway amid the throng.

With results such as these, the experiment which the four friends referred to have enabled the Museum to make has amply justified itself and pointed the way for the future. The splendid acoustic properties of our Fifth Avenue hall, the noble setting of the Museum and its contents for music of a fine character, and the nature of the popular response, all prove beyond question that the Museum has

before it a new opportunity to be of service to the people of our city, in a field which legitimately belongs to it, by including music among the arts that are to be worthily represented within its walls, and by offering this to the public as freely as it does paintings, sculpture, and man's other ideal creations. Let us hope that the means may be found to make such concerts as those which have just been given a permanent feature of the Museum's winter activities. E. R.

NOTE. Since the above articles were written, funds have been guaranteed for four concerts to be given on Saturday evenings in March, beginning on the eighth. These will be conducted by Mr. Mannes and free to the public without tickets.

### AN APPRECIATION

THE following letter from one of the "public," a gentleman not a member of the Museum, has been placed in the hands of the Secretary by the person to whom it was addressed:

"The public has some one to thank for initiating the promenade concerts at the Metropolitan Museum. I am informed that if I offer my personal thanks to yourself, they will eventually reach the proper destination.

"I cannot imagine a condition in which all conditions of beauty could be more fully joined. Everything considered, I suppose there is no finer palace in the world than the 'Met.' It only lacked the voice to proclaim itself the cathedral of that part of us that despises the sordid and the mean. Mr. Mannes' orchestra supplied the voice.

"And the whole concert was so casual and courteous; I liked the little grass mats provided to keep one from contact with the cold facts of architecture. I liked it all. Liked it so much that I wondered if a dream had not slipped up and surrounded me, unawares.

"This is a better stroke for mutual understanding and liking among our much-mixed peoples than most will suppose. The great crowds prove it. Sorry they are over, these unexpected Arabian nights."